

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Submission of

ONTARIO HYDRO

to the

Royal Commission

On Electric Power Planning

with respect to the

Public Information Hearings

March, 1976

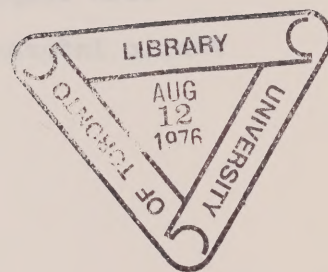


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1 1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN ONTARIO HYDRO PLANNING

3 1.1 GENERAL

5 Ontario Hydro is very conscious of its responsibility
6 to involve the public in the planning process. The
7 recognition by the Royal Commission on Electric Power
8 Planning of the importance of public participation
9 has been stated by Dr. Porter on many occasions and
10 Ontario Hydro looks forward to receiving the
11 Commission's views on how public participation can
12 best be incorporated in the planning process.

14 Partly as a result of recommendations from Task Force
15 Hydro, and partly as a result of the general course
16 of events in North America, the activities of Ontario
17 Hydro have been very widely discussed with the public
18 in recent years. Some of this has taken place
19 through formal hearing processes, but a great deal
20 has resulted from Ontario Hydro initiatives,
21 particularly in relation to location of facilities.

23 Ontario Hydro was an active participant in one of the
24 most extensive public participation projects ever
25 undertaken in this country, the Man and Resources
26 Conference, of 1972/73. Many of the guidelines on
27 "citizen participation" recommended by that Conference
28 at its final sessions of November 1973 have been
29 incorporated in Ontario Hydro's public participation
30 procedures.

32 Formal hearings constitute a major element of the
33 public participation process. Ontario Hydro has been
34 involved with many of these in recent years,
35 including:

36 Ontario Energy Board
37 National Energy Board
38 Solandt Commission
39 Environmental Hearing Board
40 Select Committee

42 Each of these hearing processes has its own
43 characteristics but they all provide the public with
44 an opportunity to review many elements of Ontario
45 Hydro's planning.

47 1.1.1 Disclosure of Information

49 A common element in all hearing processes, and in
50 public participation generally, is the demand by the
51 public for information of various kinds. These
52 Public Information Hearings will go a long way in
53
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1 providing the information that will allow people to
2 understand the complexities of power system planning
3 and development.

4
5 Release of Information to the Public

6
7 Ontario Hydro's general policy regarding the release
8 of information to the public is as follows:

9
10 Ontario Hydro as a public corporation, should make
11 the disclosure of information a natural part of its
12 operating procedures, whether in response to requests
13 from external sources or on its own initiative.

14 For requests from the news media, private citizens
15 and special interest groups, the general policy is to
16 respond to all that are reasonable.

17
18 Certain information, such as the following, may
19 reasonably be withheld.

- 20
21 1. Matters under negotiation and matters requiring
22 the concurrence of a second party involving
23 contracts, employee relations, or dealings in
24 property.
25
26 2. Working papers and preliminary or partially-
27 completed reports.
28
29 3. Certain manuals, specifications and drawings and
30 other documents in which the Corporation has a
31 proprietary interest.
32
33 4. Matters of policy under consideration.
34
35 5. Information concerning physical security systems
36 within Ontario Hydro.

37
38 Some requests may not be reasonable because of the
39 extensive manhours required either to compile the
40 information or to rearrange it in a different form
41 from that in which it is normally kept. In such
42 instances every effort will be made to explain the
43 difficulty and to encourage the enquirer to accept
44 information in the form it is normally kept or
45 supplied to review bodies.

46
47 1.2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN PROJECT PLANNING

48 INTRODUCTION

49
50 Public participation plays a vital role in planning
51 extensions to Ontario Hydro's electrical system.
52 Responding to encouragement from both government and
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1 the public, Hydro has involved the public in varying
2 degrees in all projects undertaken since 1972. The
3 latest step was taken with the establishment of the
4 Route and Site Selection Division in 1975, including
5 a responsibility for designing and implementing
6 public involvement programs in project planning.

7
8 As a result, a number of Ontario Hydro procedures and
9 policies have been revised and improved with public
10 involvement: for example, property policies and
11 construction practices.

12
13 "Public participation" means different things to
14 different people.

15
16 To some, public participation is just a method of
17 getting public comment on a proposal. To others,
18 it's an opportunity for the public to confront Hydro
19 with objections which must be recognized. To still
20 others, it describes any project which is not planned
21 entirely by its proponents.

22
23 To Hydro, public participation means not only sharing
24 information and alternatives with the public at large
25 - but obtaining specific municipal, provincial or
26 federal approvals, and setting out procedures for
27 achieving this.

28
29 Public participation, in Hydro's operations, involves
30 three elements. The first is a study in which
31 individuals and organizations contribute information
32 and suggest priorities concerning the selection of
33 alternative locations for a transmission line route
34 or site for a generating or transformer station. The
35 second is a formal review of the first element before
36 a government-appointed independent public hearing
37 body. The third is the approval process in which the
38 recommendations of Hydro and the review body are
39 evaluated by the Government of Ontario, and a
40 decision reached.

41
42 Public reviews have now become common for Ontario
43 Hydro projects. Such reviews, following the
44 completion of the public study, give the public an
45 opportunity to submit briefs, provide testimony and
46 question expert witnesses about Hydro's
47 recommendations. The first of such hearings were the
48 Solandt Commission, followed by the Environmental
49 Hearing Board. In future, such hearings as are
50 required will be held under the environmental
51 assessment legislation.

52
53 Such review boards can and have proposed changes to
54 Hydro recommended proposals.
55

The public then has 30-60 days to consider the recommendations of the review board. This allows opponents of the proposal to submit their case to the Minister of Energy. The final decision is then made by the provincial cabinet.

This three-part process - study, review, and decision-making - reflects society's need for a voice in comprehensive over-all planning.

1.2.1 Historical Review to 1974

1.2.1.1 Planning Prior to 1971

The external planning process until 1971 consisted largely of contact with several levels of government officials. Ontario Hydro reviewed plans for its projects with a "liaison committee" consisting of representatives of several ministries of the provincial government. Other regulatory agencies, including federal authorities, regional and county planning officials, and conservation authorities, were consulted. After alternatives had been considered and reviewed, local municipalities were normally consulted to determine if the proposed project interfered with any planned or proposed developments.

The public itself - either as interest groups, or as affected individuals - was not an integral part of the process. It was not customary to hold public meetings or to publish information until a site or route had been designated.

The demand by the public for a say in planning began to show in 1971 with the rejection of the site chosen for the Toronto Central switching station, and reached a peak in 1972 with the concerns expressed for the proposed Nanticoke-Pickering 500 kV transmission line. At that time, a group of individuals submitted a petition containing 5,000 signatures asking the Premier of Ontario for a further study and a public inquiry into the routing of the transmission line. This request was met with the appointment of Dr. Omond Solandt under the Public Inquiries Act to review Hydro's proposed route.

Ontario Hydro's statement to Dr. Solandt of October 16, 1972, outlined the procedures developed by Ontario Hydro for public involvement in planning major facilities.

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1 1.2.1.2 Scope of the Early Public Participation Programs
2 (1971 - 1974)
3

4 As identified in the report to the Solandt
5 Commission, the new process on which Hydro had
6 embarked stressed the exchange of information. The
7 objectives of that public participation program were
8 stated to:

- 9
- 10 - To provide opportunities for the general public
- 11 to learn about the project, the proposed study,
- 12 the required facilities and the associated Hydro
- 13 practices, policies and procedures.
- 14
- 15 - To enable interested individuals and existing
- 16 interest groups to contribute a local set of
- 17 values to assist in formulation of a weighting
- 18 system for use in the environmental study,
- 19 together with specific details about their area
- 20 to help lessen the impact of the facilities.
- 21
- 22 - To provide a forum for the presentation and
- 23 discussion of the corridors and routes produced
- 24 by the study at key stages.
- 25
- 26 - To convince the public that the routes produced
- 27 by this process were the best available, and
- 28 thereby gain public approval of the results.

29 The information to be provided to the public included
30 for the first time a description of the need for and
31 scope of a project, its location, right of way, and
32 the methods to be used in its construction.
33

34 The public in turn was asked to provide Hydro with
35 information, including both fact and opinion, about
36 local conditions, the process for comparing
37 alternatives, and the alternatives themselves.
38

39 It was felt that if the public knew about the project
40 or had contributed data to aid in the selection of
41 the final location, the recommended project would
42 enjoy wider public acceptance.
43

44 1.2.1.3 Methods Used in the 1971 - 1974 Programs
45

46 Several different methods for involving the public
47 were used. Included were:

- 48
- 49 - public meetings
- 50 - information centres
- 51 - information flyers
- 52 - information kits
- 53
- 54
- 55

- opinion surveys
- questionnaires
- news releases, articles and advertisements
- meetings with elected and appointed officials

1.2.1.4 Major Transmission Studies

Apart from the Middleport-Cherrywood (Nanticoke-Pickering) project under review by the Solandt Commission, there were four major transmission studies, three at 500 kV and one at 230 kV, begun between 1971 and 1974.

- a) Nanticoke-London, Lennox-Oshawa, Bradley-Georgetown (500 kV)
- b) Prince Edward County Supply (230 kV)

The public participation program for the Hydro studies consisted of three phases, beginning with the very broad study area through a series of corridors, finally narrowing down to a specific right-of-way.

Phase I

At the beginning of each study, a series of preview meetings were normally held with elected and appointed officials, members of conservation authorities and the media. These were followed by a series of public meetings. An information kit was distributed to people attending the meetings and additional copies placed in the municipal offices. Included in each kit was information about:

1. Public participation
2. The need for additional power
3. Property policies
4. Transmission line technology
5. Ontario Hydro's construction and maintenance policies
6. Map of the study area

Mailing lists were assembled and used to send out future project information to those who indicated an interest in being kept informed. Questionnaires were distributed on some projects to gather information about local public preferences.

Phase II

The second phase of the project involved the identification of several alternative corridors within the study area. These were introduced to the public at a series of meetings. In addition to advertising outlining the times and places for the meetings, a second information flyer including a map with a space for individual comments was sent out. Comments on the corridors were received as were briefs from councils, ratepayer groups and concerned citizens. These provided valuable information which was utilized in the next phase.

Phase III

In the third phase, transmission line routes within the corridors identified in Phase II were determined. Meetings were held with local officials within the study area to outline the proposed transmission line routes within the corridors and collect any additional data which would help in the selection of the routes. These were followed by similar public meetings which sought the concerns of individuals about the proposed transmission lines and any additional data which might affect the proposed routing.

In addition to the public meetings, information centres were opened in some study areas to provide people with the opportunity to discuss individual concerns.

There was a great deal of public reaction to the proposed routes - much of it unfavourable. At this stage, some people were now directly affected by the proposals and reacted accordingly. Citizens groups formed, letters and briefs were written to the editors of the local papers, M.P.P.s, and councils and appeals were made to the government.

Results of the Program

Over the two-year period of each of the projects many people became involved not only in the specific problems of routing a transmission line but also in the question of need and the property, construction and maintenance procedures.

The response at the public meetings, particularly in the third phase, was large and well organized. It also indicated that the methods used to alert people to the studies worked reasonably well.

During the course of the studies, Hydro was given considerable support, both editorially and at meetings, for its change in approach to the public and new openness about planning.

Review boards have commented favourably on the public participation program, but have suggested that the public become involved earlier in the process.

Generally, with this level of public participation, the community has the opportunity to become well informed about a study and in a position to provide meaningful information to the planners.

1.2.1.5 Generating Station Studies

There were 6 generating station studies under way in this period: Wesleyville, Pickering 'B', Bruce 'B', Thunder Bay extension, Darlington, and a further station study in North-western Ontario. The last of these studies was at the site-selection stage; the remainder were under review for site development or expansion.

Public participation in generating station studies was undertaken to provide a forum for local residents to discuss the proposal and its implications for the community. In the generating station projects under way in this period, due to the requirement for long lead times, site locations had been determined and the site acquired much earlier. Public participation generally took the form of public meetings in which residents had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss their concerns about various aspects of the project.

The methods used were similar to those in transmission line studies. These included press coverage of meetings, advertisements, meetings with elected and appointed officials, and information kits provided to all interested residents.

The approach used during this period appeared to be quite successful. The communities were well informed about the projects and people were able to identify with Hydro representatives with whom they could discuss any additional concerns.

1.2.1.6 Other Projects

Public participation in other projects consisted of a community information program. Prior to construction, residents adjacent to the facilities

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were notified of the project and the proposed construction schedule. These contacts with the residents gave them a chance to raise individual concerns and provided a future contact within Hydro in case problems arose.

1.2.2 What Makes Public Participation an Effective Planning Function

1.2.2.1 Internal Review of the Early Public Participation Process

After three years of experience - between 1971 and 1974 - with the early format of public participation, it was apparent that the process needed some modification. For example, public resistance to some projects as they moved to the late stages included criticism of the procedures and execution of the public involvement process.

Ontario Hydro undertook a major review in 1974. It was conducted by the planning staff along with outside groups and individuals who had been involved in projects as observers or participants. The objective was to see how Hydro could improve its project planning and communication techniques so that the public involvement process would be more effective. The review analyzed the objectives of the first programs, the methods used to involve the public, recognized the beneficial results of these efforts, and identified the problem areas.

In general the public involvement programs were felt to be successful in bringing information about the studies to a wide variety of people resulting in a greater degree of public understanding about the projects. The number who became involved was significant. The process stimulated a regular flow of information, comment and criticism for the attention of those involved in the various studies.

On the other hand, the programs had fallen short of their objectives in two important aspects. Firstly, the recommended route or site location was not always accepted by the public even though they were involved in the selection process. This suggests that complete acceptance of a particular project by all members of the public may never be a realizable goal. Secondly, the need for the project was either not properly understood or accepted or the methods for conducting the study were not fully appreciated.

The review culminated in a set of guidelines for project planners which were adopted by management at the start of 1975.

The main recommendations for these guidelines are summarized as follows:

- Hydro should encourage dialogue with members of the public during the early planning stage and continuing until completion of the line/site location study.
- For transmission route studies Hydro should substitute informal information centres for formal public meetings. A combination of public meetings and information centres will be used for generation site selection studies, and public meetings will continue to be used when seeking approval of specific generating stations.
- The differences in the policies of various government ministries relating to Hydro matters should be identified and resolved.
- There should be public discussion of the Long Range Planning concepts.
- There should be public discussion of the system plan.
- The concept of Citizens Committees should be adopted on a trial basis. Their role will be to examine specific issues and give advice to the Project Team.
- Hydro should actively promote a better community understanding of the environmental study.

Although there has been recent criticism of Hydro's public participation programs, the examples most often quoted have been either from the early pre-review projects, or from projects begun before the new guidelines were adopted. Few post-1974 projects have evolved far enough to permit significant analysis. At this stage, it is hoped that the application of the guidelines will help overcome much of the criticism. However, it must be recognized that there are limits to what public participation can achieve, however comprehensively it is planned and implemented.

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1 1.2.2.2 Opportunities for Public Involvement

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3 (a) Type of Facility

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5 Different types of electrical facilities present
6 different situations for the public. For
7 instance, there are relatively few physical
8 restrictions to the location of a transmission
9 line. The public normally will be able to help
10 rate the importance of the various factors to be
11 considered in determining the final location.
12 On the other hand, the physical requirements for
13 a thermal generating station may eliminate some
14 alternatives which might be preferred by the
15 public in a study of land-use priorities. A
16 transformer station frequently may need to be
17 located close to or inside a built-up community
18 which will benefit directly from improved
19 service.

20 (b) Involvement in the Study Process

21
22
23 The procedure for determining transmission or
24 generating site locations progresses in logical
25 steps through an elimination process, from a
26 very broad regional level to a much more
27 detailed local level.

28
29 Similarly the area to be covered changes. Early
30 on, many thousands of square miles are covered
31 in a study area, having a number of districts
32 with little in common. Later, specific
33 localities are examined. Each phase in a study
34 generates its own level of interest. Some
35 individuals will wish to commit the necessary
36 time to contribute to the selection of limits to
37 the study area as well as to participate in the
38 study itself. On the other hand, there have
39 been numerous requests from people attending
40 early project public meetings to be involved
41 only when there is something to show - some
42 lines on a map.

43
44 Spontaneous involvement usually comes from the
45 local level and is based on locational issues.
46 Sometimes, the people who become involved later
47 in the study wish to have the earlier stages of
48 the study re-examined.

49
50 Because the broad public interest must be
51 reflected in any proposal to look anywhere for
52 new generation and transmission in Ontario, it
53
54
55

is important to find a formula for selecting and agreeing upon the study area - and an appropriate public level who can provide the public involvement.

Certain groups have a very active and important role in the selection of a study area - notably the ministries of the provincial government together with agencies, organizations, and interest groups which have a responsibility for and interest in the allocation of land for its most suitable use, across the province. A requirement for sound provincially-set standards for land-use priorities has been identified many times.

Once a study area has been determined, based on sound provincial and regional objectives, the public contribution to the location studies will be concentrated at the local level.

(c) Time Requirements

Sufficient time exists in the project schedule to allow for full public involvement. A major project may require two years of development work with public groups. Many volunteers may lose interest or not have the time to participate continuously through the life of a study.

The considerable staff time required to gather and evaluate the technical and environmental data necessary for project studies can also discourage otherwise willing participants.

(d) Degree of Involvement

Most people will be satisfied with being kept informed through regular information channels: their individual concerns can often be discussed through personal contact with the team representatives or at an information centre.

However, a need may exist for a core of people to be kept involved throughout the study. In past studies, few of those interested in the project in its early stage maintained that interest in a productive way throughout. Many cease to participate when it becomes apparent they are not going to be affected. As a result, those who become involved at the later stages were not part of the earlier process which

generated the alternatives, and may not agree with them.

1.2.2.3 Goals, Roles and Expectations

(a) Ontario Hydro

As defined in its review in 1975 Ontario Hydro sees public participation as "that essential element of the planning process by which the concerns of the potentially affected public are considered in the planning of Hydro facilities. The aim is to ensure that the public's interests and priorities are incorporated from the earliest stages of planning. The broadest possible involvement should be encouraged with the public working in conjunction with Hydro to arrive at recommendations that will assist in any decision-making."

In Hydro project planning, Hydro staff has clearly identified roles and responsibilities. As a team they are responsible for the development and implementation of various programs. The team assigned to each project is responsible for providing the public a good base of background information and ensuring that they have meaningful opportunities for involvement.

(b) Ontario Hydro's Perception of Goals and Role of Others

Originally contacts external to Hydro included federal and provincial regulatory bodies and municipal officials who could provide official information or confirmation. These contacts still form an integral part of the programs today.

Ontario Hydro co-ordinates its contact with provincial ministries by means of "external teams". Each ministry's separate objectives are identified and compared with any conflicting goals. The main thrust of public participation planning is to involve the other, unofficial public interests.

In the earlier participation programs the role of public interest groups and individuals was chiefly limited to that of responding to Hydro proposals.

In planning future programs, a much more active role is envisaged for many of the groups and individuals with a specific interest.

Much of the information required for project decisions is technical and will be provided from technical sources. Some of the non-technical information can be collected from official channels; some from general public sources. Some of the decisions come from a direct comparison of technical alternatives; some are subject to local opinions and wants. A combined process involving Hydro, the public, and the official sector is essential if the information collected and the project decisions made are to meet the goals of public participation.

The following comments reflect Ontario Hydro's recent project experiences with agencies, organizations and individuals; they are not by any means exhaustive.

(c) Ontario Government Agencies

The objectives of different agencies of government appear to vary. Some need to become involved in order to perform a well-established regulatory function. Others are concerned with ensuring that project planning reflects a variety of government and ministry policies.

In the main it is usually possible for Hydro planners to embark upon a new study with the co-operation of ministry planners having the common objective of finding an acceptable location for an Ontario Hydro facility within the broader context of provincial planning.

Ministry representatives are responsible for providing ministry information and commenting on priorities, alternatives, locations and impacts. They are also responsible for keeping ministry staff informed. Local ministry employees are a source of information to public groups. Regulatory ministries give guidelines regarding requirements for approvals, including the amount of detail for study.

(d) Municipalities

Municipalities can be considered to have two goals. One objective is to ensure that Hydro project plans take into account local plans and

by-laws, present and proposed. The role played by their representatives toward this objective is clear.

Another aim is to see that local interests - political, commercial and residential - are considered. These include their concern about the potential effect on municipal services caused by a project.

Municipal councils are advised at the outset of the scope of the project, the range of possible impacts and the opportunities for citizen involvement. Thereafter they are kept informed. In both his reports Dr. Omond Solandt recognized that municipal councils tend to avoid supporting any one of the variety of alternatives presented. In his second report he also suggested that municipal governments should share the responsibility of keeping their citizens informed.

(e) Organizations

Goals of organizations differ widely. Those groups coordinating the varying interests of a province-wide membership need to consider each Ontario Hydro project against the background of the overall general objectives of their organization. These objectives may resemble in scope those of the provincial ministries.

Groups with a more protective function for some local property - such as residents associations, ratepayer groups and wildlife associations, - are more likely to take the position that a Hydro facility should be located elsewhere.

Policy issues, such as zero-growth, are often raised in project studies. Those interest groups who support such policies will, by definition, act to win support against the project.

Cross - community interest groups - with broad representations from all interests - would be of most assistance to Hydro in meeting its public participation objectives. The formation of such groups will be encouraged in future studies.

Despite the apparent diversity of objectives, there is one basic role which should be common to all organizations - that of acting as a

communication link, carrying a steady flow of information and comment between Ontario Hydro and the membership.

(f) Individuals

The role of the individual is the most difficult to clarify. In general terms, individual interests are concerned with specific terrain - whether land he owns or land he values for any number of reasons. He may feel satisfied with an opportunity to comment at an information centre on specific alternatives. If he also is interested in the patterns of social development, he may wish to get into overall community planning. Or, he may have no particular allegiance to any existing organization, but may wish to belong to a community working group.

(g) Working Groups

Working groups may be the most effective forum in which different interests and concerned individuals can assemble to provide an over-all "community" viewpoint on a project. Various names may be applied, such as task force, study committee, advisory group. In some cases a working group might operate as a third "team", which is made responsible for following a study through its various stages and helping to develop a public perspective of the information, processes and alternatives as they are developed. This is an active role, similar to that of the technical team of ministry representatives whose objectives and comments are constantly brought into the study process.

In any situation, there is a responsibility for each member representing an organization or interest group to report back regularly to his home organization and the broad public. If this does not take place, such groups may not receive enough support from individuals to be recognized as representative of the community so that the results of their work are widely accepted.

(h) Expectations

The ease with which the basic objectives of the different individuals or groups can be identified and resolved has a major influence on the success of public participation. If the

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objectives are not brought out and recognized by all parties early in the process, there is little likelihood of achieving consensus.

Often a basic assumption of public involvement is that when an agency like Hydro obtains public comment on any aspect of a proposal, the person contributing that "input" expects to see some return for the investment. He expects his contribution will visibly alter the location, or weighting of alternatives. In studies to date, that person has not often acknowledged that a host of other contributions, being sought simultaneously, may mean that the end result does not reflect only his viewpoint. He concludes, wrongly, that "Hydro doesn't pay any attention".

Most unsatisfactory results from past projects can be attributed to 1) poor identification of objectives and expectations among participant groups, 2) the development of group interests too late in the public involvement process to achieve basic changes in that process or, 3) the goals of a group extending beyond the particular project, with the public participation process for a project being used to attempt to achieve those wider goals.

To achieve effective public participation Hydro is committed to reach out and involve the public in a positive way. But there must be an equal commitment on behalf of those who seek to be involved that they share in the responsibility to find a solution.

1.2.2.4 Variations

There are no set rules for public involvement programs in project planning. They need to be custom designed. Reference has been made to the factors affecting the potential for success of any program - and to the varying objectives, roles and expectations of the public.

There are other variables which have an influence on the type of program which Ontario Hydro may conduct.

(a) Public

At different stages in a Hydro study, the public to be involved ranges from staff of provincial or municipal government bodies, directors of

1 province-wide organizations or interest groups,
2 to local affiliates of these and locally-based
3 groups; land-owners, taxpayers, school children,
4 senior citizens, manufactures, service
5 industries, farmers, politicians and others.

6
7 This creates a need for a variety of
8 communication methods, many levels of background
9 information and a constant field presence to
10 maintain good liaison with each sector. In
11 particular, it requires much time and effort to
12 identify which of these elements is present in
13 any "community".

14 (b) Environment

15
16 Two identical studies - for example, the
17 improvement of supply to a medium-size community
18 by means of the construction of a 230 kV
19 transformer station and a double-circuit 230 kV
20 transmission line - if conducted in different
21 parts of Ontario will quite probably demand
22 distinctly different public involvement
23 programs.

24
25 Issues which need to be discussed as background
26 to a study take on a new dimension depending on
27 events happening in the locality in an adjacent
28 town, associated industry, or at another
29 political level.

30
31 An approach used in urban Ontario may not be
32 appropriate in rural or northern Ontario.
33 Timing, distance, convenience, or the state of
34 the local economy could all be determining
35 factors. Attitudes and concerns differ from
36 place to place.

37
38 (c) Scale

39
40 Some projects affect only a limited area in
41 which impact is limited or concentrated in a
42 neighbourhood; others have a regional or
43 provincial scope covering thousands of square
44 miles. Some cannot be resolved without years of
45 study; others can be completed inside a matter
46 of months. Major projects, such as a thermal
47 generating station, may require considerable
48 effort for the public to absorb new and
49 unfamiliar technology. Others, such as the
50 twinning of an existing rural transmission line,
51 will raise different sets of problems.

(d) Issues

Some projects may represent at worst a physical intrusion into a new area, where the challenge is to find a formula for keeping the intrusion to a minimum.

For other projects, the problem of helping to accommodate an intrusion upon the local economy and environment may be compounded by more complex issues of the sort which accompany thermal generating stations.

(e) Agency

Public participation in planning is widely practised by other agencies as well. The agencies may be at the senior government level (dealing with highways, parks, sanitation, housing, airports, regional plans, and so on), at the local government level (concerned with official plans, transportation schemes, day-care and recreational facilities) and even at the private sector level.

Each agency has a public participation component because today without it, its planning is incomplete. Some projects are mainly beneficial to communities; some benefit local residents only indirectly but receive no recognition for this.

1.2.2.5 Schedules

When many of the projects which have been under public study since 1971 were planned, their schedules were long enough to accommodate the degree of public involvement then in existence.

As these studies progressed the public's desire to expand the study area or change the nature of the study, although recognized, could not be accommodated without delaying the in-service dates of the project. This resulted in resistance to routes and sites located under the earlier process.

It is important that sufficient time be allowed for adequate public involvement and the necessary reviews and decisions. However, a public participation process without time limitations has both advantages and disadvantages.

The advantages are that project studies can begin earlier, before decisions are made restricting the degree of public involvement possible. In each phase, when sufficient time can be allotted for public review of project information, more informed opinions and views should be forthcoming. On the other hand a study may last over two years, making continuous volunteer citizen involvement difficult.

Currently the lead time required for a nuclear generating station to be brought into service is about thirteen years. A major transmission line needs less time, about eight years. The public involvement program is one component of the total planning, review and approval process which determines these lead times.

1.2.3 The Involvement of the Public in Planning
Future Ontario Hydro Projects

1.2.3.1 Concepts for Future Involvement

All projects begun since January, 1975 (since the revised approach guidelines were incorporated) are considered future projects for the purpose of this discussion.

(a) General Principles

Certain key principles have been established to meet the original objectives of the public participation plan. These are:

- i) Hydro should provide opportunities for the general public to learn about the project, the proposed study, the required facilities and associated Hydro practices, policies and procedures. Continuous public dialogue should be encouraged from the start of the study until it is completed.
- ii) Hydro should provide the public an opportunity to consider and comment on the need and the alternative plans that can meet the need.
- iii) Hydro should enable interested individuals and existing interest groups to contribute a local set of values to assist in formulating a weighting system to be used in the environmental study, together with specific details about their area to help lessen the impact of the facilities.

Citizen committees (working groups) should be formed to examine specific issues and advise the project team. Hydro should actively promote a better understanding of what is involved in the environmental study.

- iv) Hydro should provide a forum - normally through informal information centres - for presentation and discussion of the study at each stage.

The new principles recognize that if citizens are to support the routes or sites selected as a result of the study, they will need to have been a part of the study.

It seems generally true that the projects which can be most readily resolved through public involvement are those which

- add a valued physical asset to the community
- affect a small number of people
- create an impact on a small physical area
- can be completed in reasonable time

(b) Opportunities for Public Involvement
in the Planning Program

Phase I

The need for facilities is discussed in this phase, and if confirmed a large area is examined so that generating zones and transmission bands can be identified for study in Phase 2.

Community profiles, which contain general information about the community, are assembled and local leaders with an interest in land-use and energy matters contacted. Those who are interested are invited to begin to study the project background. Discussions are begun, comparing the generating zones, which are determined by constraint mapping, and the transmission bands, which are generated by examination of priorities to be used in eliminating regionally significant areas with high potential impact.

A first set of priorities may have been assembled by a number of provincial working groups, first in isolation, then working

together, as a control standard against which regional study area information can be measured.

Phase II

Potential generating station sites within the zones, and corresponding transmission corridors within the bands are delineated, and can be evaluated by the public.

An initial recommendation may be made at this point to the Ontario government that Hydro should acquire a site and confine further transmission studies to a limited number of corridors.

Phase III

The project becomes very specific as alternate sites for specific generating facilities and corresponding transmission rights-of-way are identified and evaluated. A report is made to the government, seeking specific approvals.

It is at this stage of the project that the individual property owners and local residents are most likely to be involved.

(c) Techniques for Communicating with the Public

Ontario Hydro has undertaken a series of Provincial Seminars to gather information and views on the planning of environmental studies and public participation programs. Some fifty participants have taken part; representing seven provincial government ministries and a wide variety of organizations and interest groups with provincial membership. The comments received have been of assistance in planning future regional and local studies.

Studies are opened with a public announcement of the over-all study. At the same time, the study area's human profile is assembled in a comprehensive community analysis, which is kept up-to-date throughout the study.

Hydro provides general background information on the project to the public and relates this information directly to the study at hand.

On the basis of the community profile, Hydro contacts the various individuals to verify

profile data, ensure accurate understanding of the project and determine individual interest in taking part in regional seminars concerned with such matters as agriculture, planning and conservation.

Phase I

Films, brochures, pamphlets, and other such material providing general background information, is distributed to the public. "External teams" are formed and meetings held with them. The nature and purpose of the study are explained through news releases and media briefings. Regionally representative groups are formed and encouraged to communicate with each other. Formal or informal meetings are held with officials elected or appointed at the county or regional municipal level. Briefing sessions are held with Hydro field and P.U.C. staff. Field trips to existing installations are arranged. Hydro personnel give presentations to interested groups in the area. A public attitude survey may be conducted. Status reports are sent to regional groups, the media, Hydro personnel and those on the mailing list.

Phase II

Public involvement as established in Phase I is maintained as Hydro arranges for:

- continued mailing of status reports
- meetings with elected and appointed officials
- ministry team meetings
- field trips for regional participants to zones and bands
- establishing or maintaining existing information centres, if required.

Phase III

Hydro continues the involvement process through:

- information centres

Line
Number

- mailings to residents within corridors to determine specific constraints within the rights-of-way
- house calls by Community Relations representatives and project team members
- existing regional working groups.

(d) Public Acceptance of this Process

No major study has progressed far enough to judge how effective this approach is. The Eastern Ontario Study is at the stage of having the community profile information checked. The initial reaction from those individuals contacted to date has been excellent. All those contacted agree with the approach, and many have indicated they would welcome the opportunity to attend a seminar or take other appropriate roles.

By comparison, the London Central Transformer Station project is a prototype study aimed at finding a site for a transformer station in the downtown core. From the beginning, this project has been based on the "working group" concept, which so far has been well accepted by the interested citizens.

1.2.3.2 Public Participation and Decision Making Process

Decisions are made by governments after all reasonable opportunities for discussion, analysis, and amendment of recommendations have been provided. These normally incorporate an independent review process, and the time required for appeals.

This can be a smooth process; but it can be difficult. If any element of the public participation program has not been satisfactory, a good deal of time may elapse between the end of the study and the final decision.

In all Hydro studies since 1971 experience shows that the manner in which the approach to involving the public was made was considered quite satisfactory - initially.

In the independent reviews conducted by the Solandt Commission and the Environmental Hearing Board, the public participation process has been complimented. However, opposition has remained.

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Often, public opposition has been against the result of the study (a site or line location) rather than the study process.

This suggests that a more realistic understanding of the role of public participation is required so that the process of involving the public is not considered a replacement for decision-making. The effectiveness of public involvement should not be measured by the public approval for the study but rather by the completeness of the opportunity for involvement and the exchange of information.

Line
Number

REFERENCES

Title

Date

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2. Solandt Commission - Interim Report October, 1972
3. BHI Limited - An Environmental Study (Middleport to Pickering) September, 1973
4. Ontario Hydro Procedures for Public Participation in Route and Site Selections and Generation and Transmission Projects Approvals January, 1974
5. Report of the Solandt Commission "Closing the Generation Gap" (Nanticoke-Pickering) March, 1974
6. Commonwealth Associates Inc. Ontario Hydro 500 kV Transmission Line Right of Way Lennox-Oshawa Environmental Report March, 1974
7. Ontario Hydro Proposed Generating Station for Wesleyville March 1974
8. Ontario Hydro - 500 kV Transmission Line Right of Way Bradley-Georgetown June, 1974
9. Ontario Hydro Public Attitude Studies Concerning a Possible Energy Centre Site on the North Channel of Lake Huron September, 1974/
September, 1975
10. Ontario Hydro Proposed Generating Station Extension for Thunder Bay January, 1975
11. Ontario Hydro Report on Public Participation in Line/Site Location January, 1975

Line
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	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
1		
2		
3	12. Ontario Hydro	February, 1975
4	Proposal for Bruce Generating	
5	Station B	
6		
7	13. Report of Solandt Commision	April, 1975
8	"Transmission"	
9	(Lennox-Oshawa)	
10		
11	14. Information Distributed during Power	1974
12	Supply to Prince-Edward County Study	
13		
14	15. Ontario Hydro	May, 1975
15	Power Supply to Prince Edward County	
16	Environmental Report	
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18	16. Report of the Ontario Hydro	May-July, 1975
19	Planning Seminars	
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21	17. Ontario Hydro	April/August, 1975
22	North Channel Site Selection Program	
23	Status Reports	
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25	18. Environmental Hearing Board	December, 1975
26	Ontario Hydro	
27	Bradley-Georgetown 500 kV Transmission	
28	Line Right-of-Way	
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30	19. Ontario Hydro	January, 1976
31	Transmission Route Study for New	
32	Facilities from Atikokan/Marmion Lake	
33	Area to Thunder Bay Area	
34	Status Report	
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